

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
AGRICULTURAL ADJUSTMENT ADMINISTRATION
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SUMMARY OF CONFERENCE OF POTATO GROWERS

Washington, D. C.

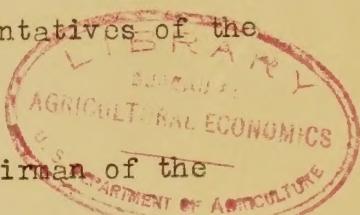
December 29 and 30, 1938

At the request of members of the potato industry, the Department of Agriculture invited representative potato growers from all major producing areas to a national conference with representatives of the Department of Agriculture.

Roy A. Porter, of Elba, N. Y., was elected chairman of the conference. William C. Ockey, of the Extension Service, was named secretary. At the same time it was announced that Mr. Ockey had been detailed for six months to work directly with representatives of the potato and vegetable industries.

The conference was called for general consideration of the industry's national problems, with special emphasis on aspects to which government programs do or can apply. For the most part, the first day's discussion related to the potato acreage provisions of the Agricultural Conservation Program. Results of the 1938 program were reported by representatives of several states, and suggestions for detailed operations under the 1939 program were offered. Since many provisions of the 1939 program already have taken definite shape, some of the discussion related to procedure in 1940.

J. B. Hutson, Assistant Administrator of the Agricultural Adjustment Administration, and C. C. Farrington, Assistant to the Administrator, were present at the session. They outlined details



of the 1939 program, and discussed the practicability of proposed changes. R. M. Evans, AAA administrator, spoke briefly.

The discussion of the second day was devoted chiefly to problems of distribution, including marketing and diversion programs. Department representatives who spoke included F. R. Wilcox, Director of the Division of Marketing and Marketing Agreements, Lawrence Myers, A. E. Mercker and Porter Taylor, of the same division, Dr. Howard S. Paine, of the Bureau of Chemistry and Soils and W. G. Meal of the Bureau of Agricultural Economics.

Outstanding among the actions of the conference were, a recommendation for the creation of a permanent National Potato Committee, and the institution of steps to actually set up such a committee. A nominating committee of five men appointed by Chairman Porter, named a three-man committee to outline the organization and purpose of a National Potato Committee, as well as to draw up a report of the conference. The organizing committee consisted of Frank Hussey, Presque Isle, Maine, chairman; Stephen K. Warrick, Scottsbluff, Nebraska; and Joseph Andraeson, St. Anthony, Idaho.

The committee made the following recommendations as to organization of a permanent National Potato Committee:

Membership - Two potato producers each from Maine, New York, Idaho, California, Florida, Virginia and Colorado, and one producer from each other state.

Method of Selection - Member or members to be chosen in each state by methods recommended by the State Director of Extension and the State Agricultural Conservation Committee.

Purpose To serve as a medium for the potato industry to work independently, and in cooperation with federal and state agencies, in the interest of all branches of the industry.

The following resolutions were adopted at the conference:

Recommendations relative to the 1939 Agricultural Conservation Programs:

1. That the rates of payment in connection with potato acreage allotments be the same in 1939 as they were in 1938; that is, 3.6 cents a bushel in the late producing area, and 5.4 cents a bushel in the early producing area.

2. That areas designated as commercial potato areas (in which the potato acreage provisions of the conservation program will apply) be the same in 1939 as they were in 1938, except for removals or additions of any specific counties in the best interests of the program. It was further recommended that such adjustments be made in conferences of State AAA committees with the directors of their respective AAA administrative areas.

3. That the method of determining state, county, and farm potato acreage allotments be the same for 1939 as for 1938.

4. That the State Agricultural Conservation Committee be authorized to adjust county potato acreage allotments within a state from county to county in accordance with the general regulations governing the agricultural conservation program, so long as the total of county allotments remains within the total state allotment.

5. That the Agricultural Adjustment Administration be urged to obtain as rapidly as possible the most recent and accurate data, to be used as a basis for adjusting state potato yield figures; also, that greater authority be granted county and community committees to adjust yield figures for individual farms.

6. That while retaining existing provisions for making adjustments in special cases, the basis for making potato acreage allotments continue to be the farm rather than the farmer.

7. That, because the recent hurricane destroyed many tobacco barns in Connecticut and Massachusetts thereby making it impractical for farmers in those states to raise as much tobacco as usual, special consideration be given to Massachusetts and Connecticut in making state potato acreage allotments, since much of the land usually planted to tobacco is adapted also to potato production. The AAA is requested to determine a percentage by which the Connecticut and Massachusetts allotments should be increased.

Recommendations relative to marketing and marketing programs:

1. That the potato industry hereby requests the Department of Agriculture to assist it to develop marketing agreement programs

similar to the previous marketing agreement programs that will fit the various potato producing areas of the country, and to submit them to potato growers in a referendum as soon as possible, and that such marketing programs be supplemented by diversion programs.

2. That the conference request the Department of Agriculture to make a study of all phases of the transportation of potatoes from points of origin to consuming centers and make a report to the next national meeting of potato growers, such study to include the effect of the movement of potatoes by truck.

3. That the potato industry request the Federal State Extension Service, AAA, and other educational agencies to cooperate with the industry in disseminating information as to marketing agreement and diversion programs authorized by Congress and the provisions of those and other programs which may be of service to potato growers and the consuming public.

4. That the Department of Agriculture conduct research studies dealing with the possibilities and development of new uses and new outlets for potatoes as a means of handling surpluses.

5. That the Department limit the use of diversion and purchase programs primarily to situations in which funds thus available may help make effective the efforts of growers in meeting their marketing problems.

6. That measures be enacted to regulate speculative financing of potato production, and to eliminate usurious rates in furnishing or advancing finances or supplies for the production and marketing of potatoes.

7. That measures be enacted to require grades of all potatoes below U. S. Commercial grade to be printed on the container when the potatoes are shipped in interstate commerce.

8. That a national potato committee be appointed to adequately represent the potato industry and that a committee of three be appointed to assist the representatives of the Department in working out the details of nominating such a national committee and to assist in outlining its duties and functions in assisting the industry and the Department to establish practical procedures for alleviating the potato problem.

9. That funds and personnel be made available so that the Department can make more adequate crop and production estimates for potatoes and conduct studies of their movement by truck and other means to market.

A list of growers attending the conference as representatives of the industry follows:

C. Bates Moore, Atmore, Alabama.

Frank Lyons, Lodi, California.

W. B. Camp, Bakersfield, California

Jacob J. Siemens, Shafter, California.

Lester Hawkins, Monte Vista, Colorado.
Harry Bailey, Eaton, Colorado.

Donald J. Grant, Buckland, Connecticut.

J. W. Sessions, La Crosse, Florida.

H. G. Lauterbach, Hansen, Idaho.
Joseph Andreason, St. Anthony, Idaho.

Ross W. Sittler, Warsaw, Indiana.

Scott E. Kelsey, Topeka, Kansas.

Frank W. Hussey, Presque Isle, Maine.

Carl Smith, Exeter, Maine.

Fred Hagen, Houlton, Maine.

Miles Lankford, Pocomoke City, Maryland.

Vernon N. Spencer, Kalkaska, Michigan.

Winfield Holmes, Wrenshall, Minnesota.

S. K. Warrick, Scottsbluff, Nebraska.

Spencer Perrine, Cranbury, New Jersey.

James C. Ewart, Cranbury, New Jersey.

Lenis G. Talmage, East Hampton, Long Island, N. Y.

Roy Porter, Elba, New York.

Carl N. Emerling, Boston, New York.

Christ Kainrad, Diamond, Ohio.

James E. Walker, Garrett, Pennsylvania.

Weir Strock, Mechanicsburg, Penna.

H. C. Meads, Weeksville, North Carolina.

John C. Broome, Aurora, North Carolina.

P. J. Flaten, Hoople, North Dakota.

G. J. Hillyard, Klamath Falls, Oregon.

Mrs. Dorothy W. Pritchard, Beaufort, South Carolina.

Everatt A. Fletcher, Garden City, South Dakota.

Cleve M. Tandy, San Benito, Texas.

Ralph E. Robson, Ogden, Utah.

Porter Hardy, Jr., Churchland, Virginia.

Ben P. Paradee, New Church, Virginia.

George W. Campbell, Onancock, Virginia.

Henry B. Ramsey, Grandview, Washington.

G. W. Gamble, Torrington, Wyoming.

Dan W. Davies, Wautoma, Wisconsin.

